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ABSTRACT

As the Head Start program has matured, the need to establish a comprehensive Career Development Program has become increasingly apparent. Job openings for personnel from program assistants to professionals, created and sustained by Head Start funding, are considered by DHEW administrators as critically important to provide employment and development opportunities for low income residents of Head Start communities. Described in this manual is a plan for the development and advancement of Head Start program assistants through a sequence of career progression steps. Groupings of tasks and course work are suggested for the entry or trainee level, the immediate level, and the advanced preprofessional level. (CS)

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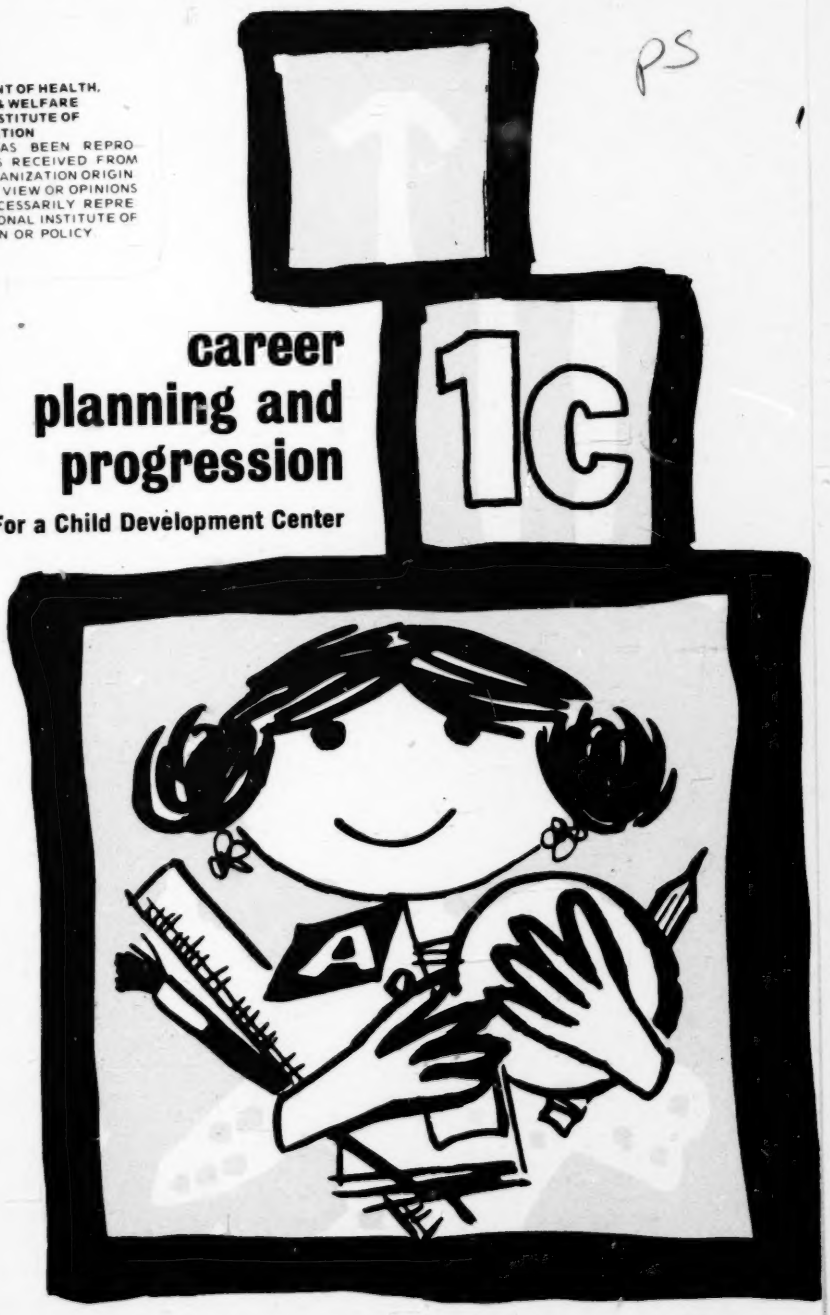
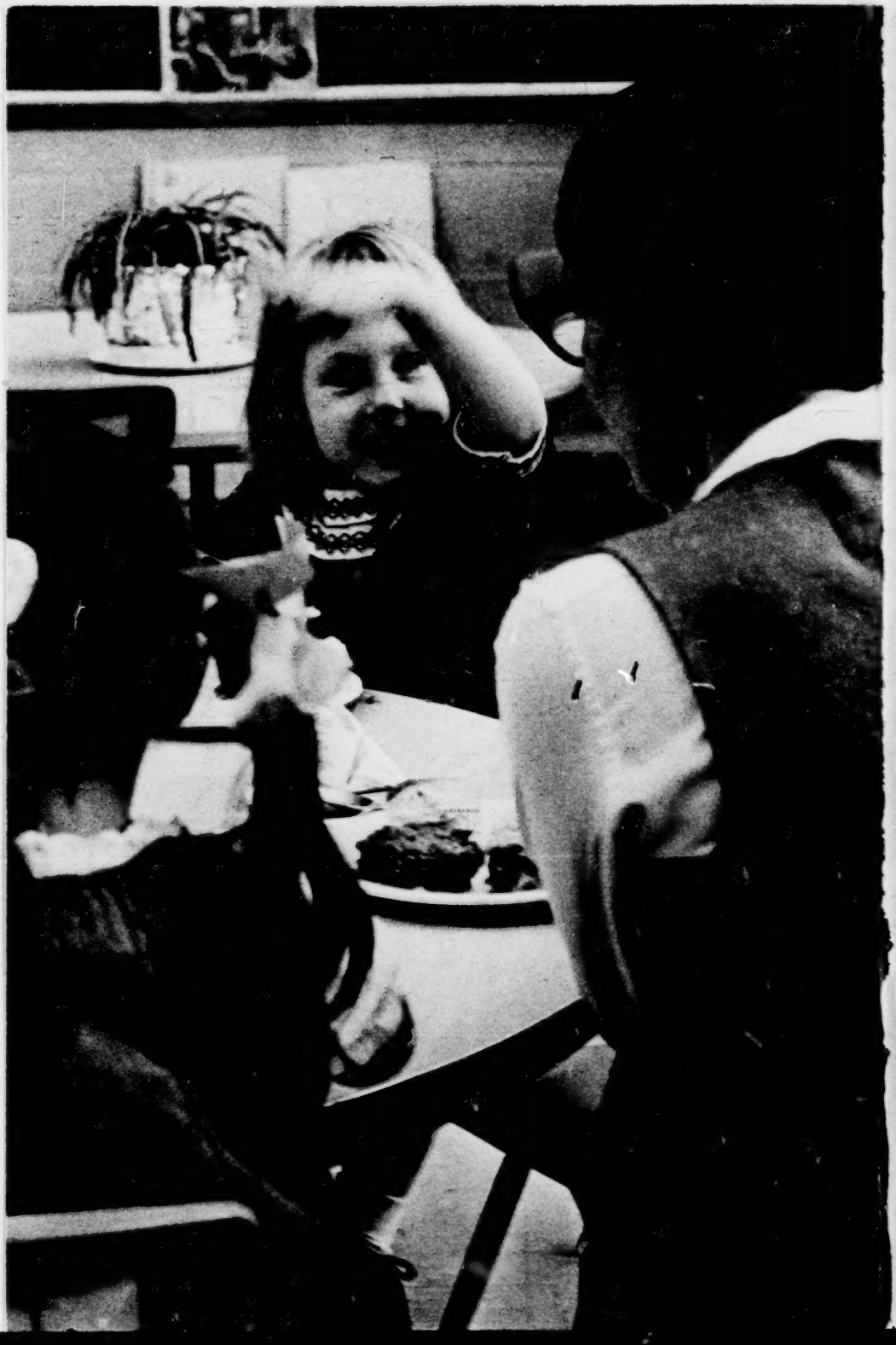
career planning and progression

For a Child Development Center





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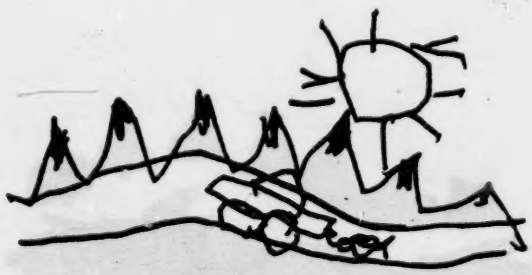

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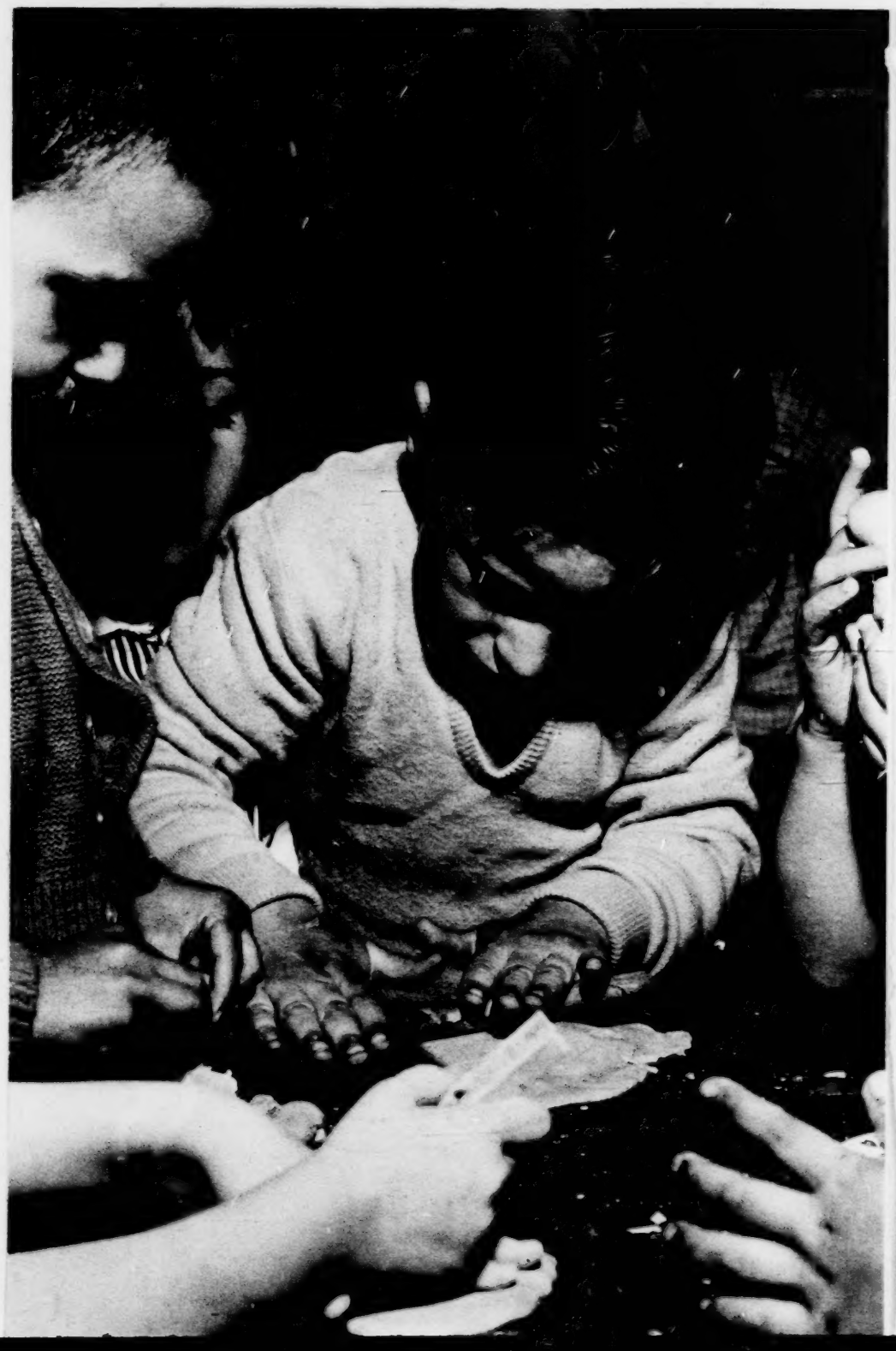

INTRODUCTION

The success of Head Start depends on the quality of staff working at all levels in the program. The act of employing staff is only the first stage in the commitment of human development. As the Head Start program has matured, the need to establish a comprehensive Career Development Program has become increasingly apparent. The national shortage of physicians, registered nurses, qualified social welfare workers, certified teachers and other professionals in the human service fields, is becoming more and more crucial. Medicare is adding its extra drain on professionals in the health fields. The facilities of the social welfare agencies are being stretched thinner and thinner by the population explosion. Public school classes are getting larger because sufficient certificated teachers are not available, particularly in the urban ghettos. The severe shortage of certificated teachers in low-income communities means that already disadvantaged children, those who have the greatest need for the greatest number of the most highly skilled and competent teachers, have the least access to them.

At the same time, the need for better-paying employment opportunities for residents of low income communities is become more intensely felt. In recent years a developing trend uses one of these problems to solve the other. Unemployed and under-employed residents of low-income communities are hired, trained and used to help

lighten the work load of overburdened professionals, particularly in the field of public service. They serve as teaching assistants, health assistants, family or social worker assistants and office assistants. They are used by the public welfare departments and other social service agencies, such as those in the health, medical, housing and manpower fields. Head Start has funded thousands of such program assistant positions, because it has a firm commitment to both the immediate and long range relief of economic deprivation.

HEW sees the job openings for "program assistants" to professionals, which are created or sustained by Head Start funding, as critically important in providing employment and development opportunities for low-income residents of Head Start communities. Therefore, it is a policy of Project Head Start to fill such positions, to the greatest possible extent, by employing suitable persons who are low-income residents of the area being served.

It is also a requirement that HEW-funded Head Start programs establish and operate continuous, comprehensive staff development programs, for professionals and program assistants alike. In the Head Start program there is of course a basic and essential need for teachers who have been trained in early childhood education. However, relatively few teachers who have specialized in the development of very young children are available. Therefore, in addition to developing program assistants, Head Start staff development programs must provide for the training of many professionals. Certified teachers, physicians, nurses and professional social workers who are new to the program will almost always need orientation and training in Head Start principles and concepts.

Potential for Outstanding Performance

However, perhaps the greatest developmental opportunities lie in the direction of finding members of low-income families who have the interest and potential to serve important and growing roles in the Head Start program. It is too often assumed that people who have little money have little ability, limited intelligence, and inadequate energy or ambition. The experience of those operating Head Start and related programs, has shown that **in every poor community there are many persons with outstanding capabilities, personal qualities, and potential for development.** Typically, however, their education was pinched off at an early point. Some with a relatively good education have been tied down to raising large families on meager incomes, and thus could not embark upon a career. Many such persons, with both limited and good educations, can be highly successful in assisting all types of Head Start professionals, especially if Head Start directors and staffs will train and encourage them to perform more and more responsible assignments.

In any program funded by Project Head Start, the teaching assistants must not just run errands, clean, straighten, arrange materials. They must not just perform clerical and nursemaid tasks, and toilet the children. These are all very important and very necessary. But each Head Start local program must have a systematic, thorough plan for the continuous development and upgrading of all program assistants. Many teaching assistants, and other assistants to professionals, can readily be trained **to assist Head Start professionals in the performance of all of their professional duties.** Obviously not all of those who serve as assistants to professionals in Head Start will have the desire or opportunity to reach professional status in terms of becoming a certificated teacher through the 4-year university route. **However, positions of assistants to professionals should always be used as opportunities to develop each individual to the limit of his interests and capabilities.**

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Benefits to the Families and the Community

The training and experience that parents and other low-income individuals get in serving as assistants in the Head Start local programs also directly benefits their families, including children not enrolled in this program. The parent who participates in an outstanding staff development program, and who thereby learns a great deal about child development, health care, social services and so forth, is inevitably helped thereby to become a better parent as well as a more effective member of the community. Career development will be a pre-eminent means of breaking the poverty cycle.

While this manual is especially directed to the development of program assistants, many of the suggestions and policies apply also to the training and development of Head Start professionals. Teachers, for example, who have not had training in early childhood education will also need specific training to enrich their knowledge and strengthen their skills in the specialized field. It is not only important but essential that professionals and program assistants participate with some training sessions whenever possible to build and strengthen the concept of team-work in the classrooms.

The Rainbow Series on Staff Development consists of six booklets containing ideas and suggestions compiled to help agencies improve the planning and operation of their career development locations. Booklets 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d are concerned largely but not exclusively with the development of program assistants. 1e is directed at preparation of individuals for top performance as a local program director and is concerned with the aspects of professional development.

1. Staff Development

Others recommendations on the planning and operation of a coordinated staff recruitment, selection and development program for all members of local Head Start staffs, including paid personnel and volunteers.

1a. Recruitment and Selection

Contains suggestions on recruitment and selection standards and procedures.

1b. Evaluating Performance and Progress

Suggests how to identify special training needs of new program assistants, emphasizes the importance of assessing their progress periodically and discussing with them their achievements and their performance problems, and includes ideas on forms, procedures, and so forth.

1c. Career Planning and Progression

Discusses helping program assistants to select career target jobs, suggests a way of organizing and dividing total in-service training plans for Head Start program assistants into blocks or phases, with small promotional steps and salary increases awarded as motivating factors and to recognize progress.

1d. Training Courses and Methods

Provides information and suggestions on organizing a career development program and conducting in-service training; offers information on sources of training information, materials and assistance.

1e. Development and Utilization of Individuals for Professional Positions

Offers recommendations on preparing individuals to serve as directors of local Head Start programs, discusses utilization of physicians, nurses, psychologists and others on a paid and volunteer basis and suggests career progression opportunities for those serving in Head Start professional positions.

A. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR "ASSISTANTS"

It is a policy of Project Head Start that individuals from low-income families must be given preference for all jobs which they can perform satisfactorily, with needed training and development. These will generally be the "assistant" jobs, such as teaching assistants, community assistants, health assistants, clerical assistants, and those jobs that combine some or all of these functions. When they are hired, such individuals must be provided opportunities to be trained for professional positions. They must be given *career opportunities,* not just job opportunities.

To provide these career opportunities, new career ladders must be developed. Continuous training, year in and year out, must be offered, aimed at enabling all interested and qualified assistants to move steadily upward. Through such programs many Head Start assistants will be enabled to assume more responsible jobs, not only in Head Start activities, but also elsewhere. Many will level off short of achieving professional status as a certified teacher, professional social worker, registered nurse, and so forth. However, with effective training, education and development, they will all be able to rise above the performance of unskilled tasks and simple chores, and will become qualified for more than minimum-wage jobs.

To the greatest extent possible, the development of Head Start employees should be designed to increase their career opportunities outside the agency, e.g., with educational systems, welfare departments, and so forth.

New employees hired as assistants in any local program of course vary greatly in their degree of readiness to perform work assignments. Some will be able to perform more complex and more responsible tasks right from the beginning; some will be able to absorb training and work assignments more quickly than others.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

Grantees and delegate agencies operating programs with Head Start funding must offer career development assistance and activities, and set up career plans for their staff with thoughtful and systematic planning.

A career development program for program assistants usually has four elements: (a) Establishment of a series of proficiency or developmental levels in each field of job specialization reflecting increased capability to perform assignments and tasks more effectively and/or to perform more difficult and more responsible tasks: (b) Preparation of a program to provide institutional and on-the-job training and structured learning experiences. The training should include a program of continuous work toward a high school equivalency certificate for those who need it. (c) Development of a testing program and standards to help determine with a satisfactory degree of objectivity whether trainees have acquired and can effectively use the knowledges and skills in which they have been given training. (d) Design of a pay advancement plan which will provide small salary increases and advancements in classifications and job titles in recognition of training successfully assimilated and mastery of planned developmental stages.

1. Establishment of a Series of Proficiency or Developmental Levels.

Each program assistant should be encouraged to select a "target job" toward which he desires to be trained. This may, for example, be a position as a certified teacher, professional social worker, registered nurse, dental technician, secretary, community development director, and so forth. The target job may or may not require a college degree, depending on state laws. The individual may already have a college degree, but not in the desired field. He may have some college training or none. In many cases the employee will not even have graduated from high school. In all cases, they should be started on a plan that will take them toward their goal, whether it can be reached in a year, whether it will take 10 years, or if they will never reach it. By selecting a target and working toward it, many will eventually reach their goal and all will benefit from whatever forward and upward progress they make. The process of designing a career

ladder therefore begins with the identification, in detail, of all the duties and tasks to which in-service and "on-the-job" training and development should be directed. If professional staff members are asked to write down all the functions, services and tasks they perform it will be relatively easy to identify those which a properly trained assistant can be expected to perform and receive training in.

2. Advancement Related to Increased Proficiency.

An important concept that must be borne in mind in planning career development of program assistants up to the threshold of professional assignments, is that it is neither possible nor desirable to create a series of distinctly different jobs through which the individual will ascend as a Head Start employee. The progression of steps set up should *not be structured rigidly, in terms of duties and tasks to be performed* at each level. It would be unrealistic to expect that a Head Start employee at the trainee level will perform only certain duties, and that trainees or "advanced" level employees are performing. There may be some differences in kinds of work performed by employees on different rungs of the career ladder, but the principal difference will be in the more

skilled performance because of the greater *degree of proficiency, skill and understanding* they have acquired as a result of their training and experience.

Thus, among the duties of employees classified as trainee, intermediate and advanced levels, there will be considerable similarity, at least on the surface. For example, all social service aides, at every level of development, may make home visits. However, the trainee, in making home visits, may be learning and performing only such fundamentals as how to establish a relationship of trust and confidence and how to identify problems. At the intermediate level, after training and experience, the assistant making home visits should probably be able to impart useful information and to help solve minor problems. With further training, development and experience as an "advanced" aide, the individual may be qualified on home visits to perform the full range of the program assistant's role. In summary, advancement of teaching assistants, health assistants and others, from trainee to intermediate to advanced levels, as in the above example, will be more importantly related to how well and how extensively the employee is capable of performing assigned functions than to any intrinsic differences in "duties" or job description content.

Advancement, represented by changes in title and salary, are incentives which strengthen the motivations of employees to study and work hard to increase their knowledge and develop their proficiencies. It is recommended that such advancements be scheduled in frequent, relatively small steps, such as an additional 10¢ an hour for successful completion of a block of training that can be mastered in six months or less.

3. Relating Tasks to Career Ladders

a. Providing for Generalists and Specialists

In a Head Start program there can be as many as four or more "Career Ladders" for program assistants, depending on the size of the program. In small programs, assistants will need to serve more as "generalists," each doing some teaching assistant, health assistant, social work assistant, and administrative assistant duties. In a very large center, or complex of centers, the staff will tend to specialize more. In either case, it is both feasible and desirable that provision be made for lateral mobility, where individuals can cross over from one specilization to another. Such a policy will provide the broadest possible

developmental opportunities for all, and enhance each individual's chances to obtain more responsible better-paying jobs.

b. A Specific Career Ladder for Each Assistant

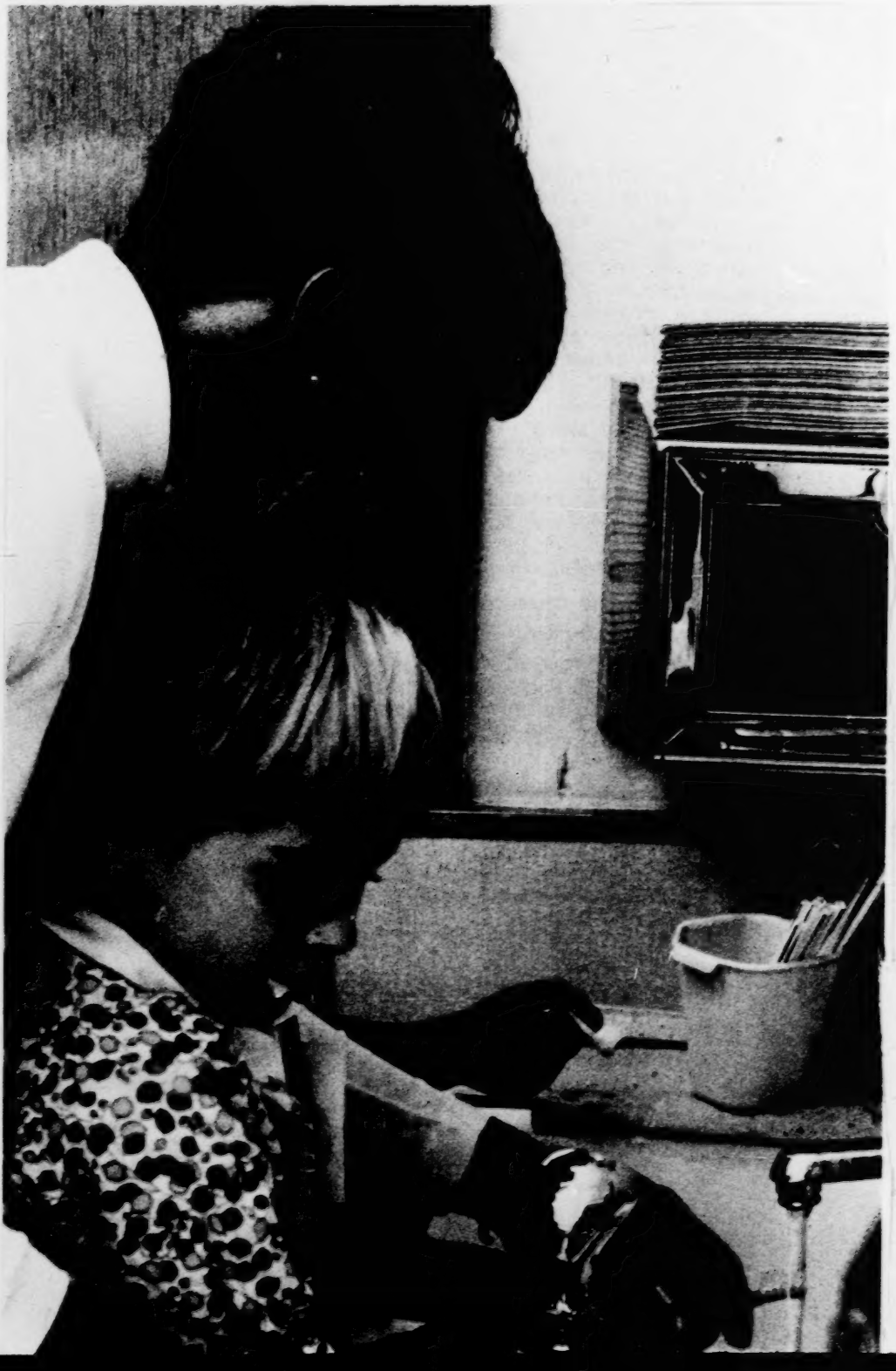
In order to design career ladders appropriate to the program and the individual, every program assistant should be evaluated as to basic developmental needs and should participate in the planning of his own career steps. A plan may have a general goal, such as becoming a registered nurse, which may cover many years. But each plan should need to be clearly and specifically defined over at least 18 months to two years. This involves planning a series of training goals and performance objectives by which the individual will receive systematic, continuous development. It is very important to recognize that the steps in a career development ladder need not represent a series of different jobs. There is, in fact, only one paid teaching assistant job in a Head Start classroom. Similarly, the health or social services program will rarely call for more than one type of assistant to professional staff members, except in larger programs where there may be clarical assistants and administrative assistants in the various program elements. A teaching assistant, for example, who has worked in the classroom for three weeks or three years will perform much the same kinds, but not the same levels of duties. The significant

differences should be in the greater proficiency with which they are performed.

All social service assistants, at every level, may make home visits. However, the trainee, in making home visits, may be learning and performing only such fundamentals as how to establish a relationship of trust and confidence and how to identify problems. At the intermediate level, after training and experience, the assistant making home visits should probably be able to impart useful information and to help solve minor problems. With further training, development and experience as an "advanced" assistant, the individual may be qualified on home visits to perform the full range of the program assistant's role. Advancement from trainee to intermediate to advanced levels, as in this example, will be more importantly related to how well and how extensively the assistant is capable of performing the home visits function than to any intrinsic difference in duties.

c. Assistants Will Often Need to Perform Work Before They are Fully Trained

As desirable as it might be to have employees receive all their training before they actually perform the work, this will obviously be impractical. For example, a new teaching assistant, with little or no training, might conceivably, on the first day of employment, help take the children on a planned outing, assist in serving meals and snacks, and clean and dress a small cut on a child, under the direction of the teacher, without having had any training in planning outings, nutrition or meal planning or first aid. It may be months before she completes her training in all such subject matter areas.



C. EXAMPLE CAREER PROGRESSION PLANS

The following examples of career progression steps are not intended as rigid formulas, in terms of sequences of content. They only illustrate how a series of upward steps may be planned for the development and advancement of Head Start program assistants.

The combinations are suggested as possible groupings of tasks and subjects to be learned at (1) The entry or trainee level, to qualify for advancement to an intermediate level. (2) At the intermediate level, for promotion to a senior or advanced level, and (3) The advanced level, for promotion to a "professional career threshold," which would identify the assistant as ready for professional level training, with financial help, if necessary and available.

Assuming that assistants would be expected to acquire the knowledge to perform satisfactorily all listed tasks for each career step or level within a period of perhaps 6 to 12 months, it would take about 18 months, in an exceptional case to 3 years or more, to reach the top of the ladder.

To determine with some degree of objectivity whether an assistant has learned and "can do" each specified task or subject, it is recommended that simple knowledge tests be used, and also that assistants be required to perform each task satisfactorily a specified number of times in order to be considered qualified in that phase of the work. They will, in effect, be "checked-off" for that task, with due credit being entered on his or her record. Consideration might be given to the presentation of a certificate to the employee at this point which can be used later as a reference and which cannot be noted in the records. When the assistant has mastered all the trainee level tasks prescribed, he or she should be advanced promptly to the intermediate level position, with a change in title and a small salary increase. The titles and salary increase are suggested ones. Centers should set up their own plans provided they are within approved Head Start salary increase policies.

1. Trainee Level.

The following combinations of tasks, and subject matter on which "academic training" might be provided (See "Supplementary Training" Booklet 1d, TRAINING COURSES AND METHODS) are offered as examples of those which might be grouped for learning at the entry or trainee level. Similar combinations can be set up for "office" or "administrative" work, or any new function that may emerge.

TITLE: Teaching Assistant Trainee PAY RATE: Starting salary * SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL:

1. Head Start objectives and concepts
2. Purpose and organization of the center
3. Head Start program components and team work
4. Establishing relationships of trust with children and their families
5. Talking with an individual child, and building his confidence and responsiveness
6. Playing games with children
7. Telling stories to children
8. Reading to children and encouraging children to use books and records
9. Playing musical instruments for the children
10. Participate in rhythm activities with the children
11. Observing and writing down the activities and behavior of a child or group of children
12. Helping children use crayons, scissors and paste
13. Helping children enjoy sensory materials, sand, mud, water
14. Preventing accidents in the classroom and outdoors
15. Recognizing and reporting signs of illness or health problems
16. Assisting in serving meals and snacks
17. Assisting in developing good habits of personal hygiene
18. Cleaning classroom and other play areas
19. Bringing out and putting materials away
20. Caring for pets and plants

* At least legal minimum wage.

TITLE: Community Assistant Trainee PAY RATE: Starting salary* SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL:

1. Head Start objectives and concepts
2. Purpose and organization of the center
3. Head Start program components and team work
4. Recruiting children
5. Establishing relationships of trust with children and their families
6. Making house-to-house surveys
7. Visiting needy families and urging them to come to the center to meet with professional staff members
8. Encouraging and assisting families to find medical aid when conditions of illness are found
9. Helping families fill out applications and other forms for community social services, legal aid, or any other assistance
10. Obtaining volunteer sitters or minding children while a parent goes for medical or dental care, or takes other children for treatment
11. Helping families develop self-help and fix-up plans to improve their living conditions
12. Obtaining emergency food and clothing for families in desperate circumstances
13. Obtaining donations of used furniture, refrigerators. stoves, and so forth, and arranging for volunteer neighbors, parents, teenagers, and others to deliver and install needed items of this nature
14. Helping families to be sure that young children get started to school at the proper age, which might otherwise be delayed by lack of adequate clothing, shoes, and so forth
15. Promoting interest and participation in Head Start and involving the families with the center; arranging transportation for them when necessary
16. Participating in meetings with professionals, parents and other community groups, and preparing reports thereon

* At least legal minimum wage.

TITLE: Health Assistant Trainee PAY RATE: Starting Salary* SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL:

1. Head Start objectives and concepts
2. Purpose and organization of the center
3. Head Start components and team work
4. Establishing relationships of trust with children and their families
5. Confidential nature of medical information
6. Bringing children to and from classroom and physician, dentist or nurse for examination or treatment
7. Picking up and delivering children and parents for examination or treatments as may be necessary
8. Obtaining and furnishing records to physician, dentist or nurse as needed
9. Observing children for coughs, signs of fever, runny noses, scalp or skin conditions, and so forth, and reporting such matters to physician or nurse
10. Observing signs of illness in the home, and assisting family to get any help needed
11. Assisting families to correct unsanitary conditions or health hazards in their homes or environment
12. Seeing that children take prescribed medicine which are due while they are at the center
13. Weighing and measuring children
14. Visiting hospitalized or bed-ridden members of families of Head Start children, to learn of needs and supply comfort, encouragement and assistance
15. Obtaining crutches, wheel chairs and other devices when needed and getting them to the patients

* At least legal minimum wage.

2. The Intermediate Positions.

Assuming adoption of an entrance or trainee level "job," there should be one or more intermediate level and one or more advanced level steps, depending on the desired pace and estimated length of the program. While each assistant should be able to proceed up the career ladder as fast as he reasonably can, each step up the ladder should represent a significant amount of experience and seasoning as well as training. Thus, progression from trainee to the first intermediate level position might be planned to take four to eight months on the average.

The second block of training and development might take another six months. On this basis, at the end of perhaps 12 to 18 months, the employee would have completed two blocks of training and experience: Trainee and Intermediate, and would be ready to move to the Advanced Level.

Tasks set up to be learned to qualify for promotion to intermediate positions might be as follows, for example:

TITLE: Teaching Assistant PAY RATE: (Small salary increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR PROMOTION TO THE ADVANCED LEVEL:

1. Growth Patterns in the Preschool Years *
2. Growth Patterns in the School Years *
3. Encouraging interest in words and symbol
4. Helping children to make books
5. Accompanying children and patterns to the library
6. Developmental use of blocks and other stacking and arranging materials
7. Teaching arts and crafts
8. Teaching songs
9. Teaching musical games
10. Taking full responsibility for a group of children during outdoor play
11. Taking full responsibility for a group of children in classroom free play
12. Helping to plan and making arrangements for trips and outings
13. Driving car, delivering and picking up children, parents, etc.
14. Visiting families in their homes and reporting observations orally and in writing
15. Assisting in preparing meals and snacks
16. Guiding children in developing manners and good eating habits
17. Helping parents learn to serve as classroom volunteers
18. Posting attendance records
19. Administering first aid
20. Inventorying and ordering supplies and materials

* Suggested academic courses.

TITLE: Community Assistant PAY RATE (Small Salary increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR PROMOTION TO THE ADVANCED LEVEL:

1. Introduction to Sociology *
2. Introduction to Psychology *
3. Introduction to the family as a social structure *
4. Assisting the Parent Coordinator in the organization of parent groups. Making arrangements for parent meetings. Encouraging parents to participate in center activities
5. Surveying or studying social services available in the community and learning the procedures and policies relative thereto
6. Doing library and research on social service questions or programs
7. Cataloguing and filing data and reports and source materials and reference materials
8. Answering the telephone, giving routine information and taking messages
9. Attending meetings with professionals to take notes and assist as appropriate
10. Assisting families to analyze their problems and catalog their needs, and helping to establish eligibility for assistance
11. Providing information to families on community services available, welfare rights, where and how to apply, who to see, and so forth, and accompanying family members to social service or other agencies for advice or assistance
12. Helping orient new families in the community, visiting their homes providing information on schools, shopping, churches, recreation, social services procedures and requirements, and so forth, and helping to see that children get enrolled in school promptly
13. Organizing teams of family members and volunteers to clean up houses, yards, and so forth, to improve sanitation and attractiveness of living conditions
14. Assisting families to find and move to better housing, apply for rent subsidies, and to buy housing when available to low-income families, such as in connection with urban renewal

* Suggested academic courses.

TITLE: Health Assistant PAY RATE: (Small salary Increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR PROMOTION TO THE ADVANCED LEVEL:

1. Growth Patterns in the Preschool Years *
2. Growth Patterns in the School Years *
3. Introduction to Nutrition *
4. Maintaining appointment calendar and reminding patients of appointments, following up on broken appointments
5. Assisting families to complete applications for medical and other health services
6. Helping parents set up home records of children's immunization shots, ailments and injuries, times and places of treatment and so forth
7. Helping prepare patients for x-ray or other diagnostic procedures
8. Collecting specimens, taking them to laboratory and obtaining reports for doctors or nurse
9. Taking temperatures, pulse and respiration counts
10. Preparing children and assisting with children receiving immunization shots
11. Taking children and assisting with children receiving immunization shots
12. Taking children for medical and dental treatments when parents cannot do so
13. Bringing to attention of Head Start doctor, nurse or nutritionist, home conditions which point up lack of adequate food, or dietary habits which may be injurious to children or family
14. Observing for signs of mental health problems, and urging families to seek assistance on problems involving alcoholism, drug addiction
15. Assisting with prenatal and postnatal care

* Suggested academic courses.

3. Advanced or Senior Level Positions

Of course all assistants to professionals will not progress as far as an "advanced" or "senior" level. The progression to the top rungs of such career ladders involve a process of screening through which will pass those who have the strongest interest and best potential for eventually reaching professional levels.

It is suggested that positions at the top or advanced level incorporate the word "senior" in the title. This helps to indicate that a more responsible level has been reached. For example, the advanced level positions would be Senior Teaching Assistant, Senior Health Assistant and Senior Social Service Assistant. Upon successful completion of this stage of their development, those involved could then move up to the top level, having arrived at the threshold of professional training.

TITLE: Senior Teaching Assistant PAY RATE: (Small Salary increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO THE PROFESSIONAL THRESHOLD LEVEL:

1. Introduction to Preschool Education *
2. Introduction to Child Psychology *
3. Assisting with enrollment of children
4. Helping to plan daily programs and new activities
5. Assisting in planning attractive, nutritious meals and snacks
6. Taking responsibility for a group of children while on a trip or outing
7. Assisting the teacher to analyze and solve problems of withdrawal, aggression, and others
8. Attending meetings with professionals
9. Participating in discussions of children's needs and progress with teacher and parents
10. Assisting in the training of new teacher assistants

* Suggested academic courses.

TITLE: Senior Community Assistant PAY RATE: (Small Salary Increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PROFESSIONAL THRESHOLD LEVEL:

1. Introduction to Social Service *
2. Introduction to Social Legislation *
3. Obtaining demographic data from institutional sources
4. Serving as parent coordinator with responsibility for organizing and relating to parent groups. Assisting such groups to establish parent education activities. Serving as liaison between the parent group and the staff, interpreting the needs of each to the other
5. Obtaining information and cooperation from business organizations
6. Studying the total problems of a family and preparing a report and set of recommendations thereon
7. Going to court with parents and/or children, to provide personal support and encouragement and seeing that they are represented and get needed advice and assistance
8. Helping families seek home improvements through their landlords, when necessary getting them assistance in filing formal complaints against landlords who are willfully neglecting conditions that are in violation of housing and health codes, helping obtain legal assistance in such circumstances, or when families are threatened with eviction

9. Assisting families to plan a budget, to obtain relief from oppressive indebtedness to enroll in consumer education courses and to join buying clubs, credit unions, cooperatives and other activities to assist low-income families with their financial management problems
10. Seeking and obtaining legal advice and assistance for families against whom action is being taken for repossession, wage garnishments and so forth
11. Discussing problems with youngsters who have dropped out of school or run away from home, helping find ways to get needed advice and assistance for them
12. Accompanying parents to school to meet school administrators, counselors, teachers and others to discuss reports on children, to seek special help for failing students, cooperation in giving extra attention to drop-outs willing to re-enroll, cooperation in obtaining transfers, and so forth
13. Organizing parent school committees to visit schools, obtain information on comparative curricula, comparative texts being used, and to seek equalization of educational standards where needed
14. Assisting in the training of new social service assistants

* Suggested academic courses.

TITLE: Senior Medical Assistant PAY RATE: (Small Salary Increase) SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PROFESSIONAL THRESHOLD LEVEL:

1. Introduction to Public Health *
2. Introduction to Mental Health *
3. Introduction to Psychology *
4. Performing medical library work
5. Interviewing parents to obtain information on immunizations, illnesses, treatment of children to set up medical history cards
6. Assisting with hearing and vision tests
7. Assisting in laboratory procedures for blood, urine and other tests
8. Ordering and maintaining stocks of medical related supplies and equipment as required by physician, dentist or nurse

9. Making house-to-house surveys to help uncover unknown and untreated illnesses and health problems
10. Helping parents to put in writing complaints about discourteous health treatment, or refusal of treatment to which they are entitled
11. Visiting health and dental agencies with parents who need assistance in expressing their problems
12. Helping families to file formal complaints of landlord neglect which has resulted in unhealthful conditions or conditions which are in violation of building and health codes
13. Participating in meetings with parents and other groups in regard to health services and helping obtain answers to questions, and advice and assistance as may be appropriate
14. Assisting in the training of new health assistants

* Suggested academic studies.

4. Professional Threshold Level

This level should be reserved for those assistants who have demonstrated unusual excellence in the performance of their responsibilities at the senior assistant level. It is not intended merely to recognize length of service. Assistants to professionals who reach this level might be advanced in title and compensation as follows:

TITLE: Career Assistant Teacher PAY RATE: (Small Salary Increase)
Career Community Assistant
Career Health Assistant
SUBJECT MATTER AND TASKS TO BE LEARNED TO QUALIFY FOR ADVANCEMENT TO PROFESSIONAL THRESHOLD LEVEL:

Individuals who have reached the top of their assistant career ladder should, of course, continue to get additional Head Start training and development as may be appropriate. They should also be used as much as possible to train and assist in training other program assistants farther down the ladder. More important, however, is the fact that these individuals will have survived a careful screening process over a period of two or more years, and will often be prime material for professional development.

When individuals reach these levels, every effort should be made to interest them in an intensive program of academic, professional training and to assist them in obtaining financial aid, such as through scholarships, subsidies, or loans to enable them to enroll in and complete professional training. See suggestions on Supplementary Training in the Section—Training Courses and Methods; Head Start Program Assistants. Through such help, some may be able to become practical nurses, others registered nurses, professional social workers, certified teachers, secretaries, or otherwise to advance themselves into the mainstream of American economic life.

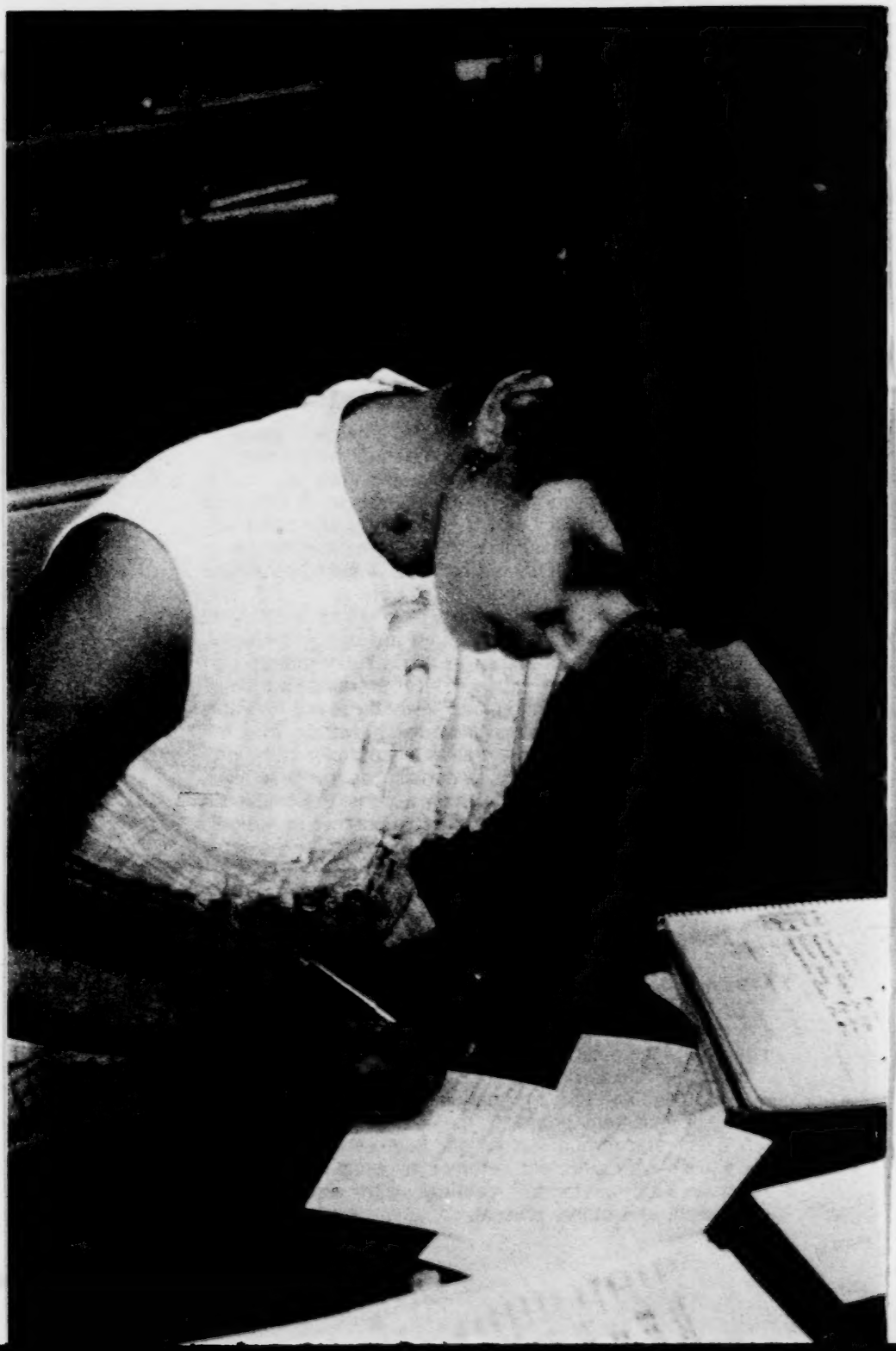
E. SALARY ADVANCEMENTS

Although Head Start grantees and delegate agencies do not have unlimited latitude in establishing salary increase policies, small salary advances may be funded and should be used to recognize increase in responsibilities and proficiency on the part of program assistants. Such salary plans should be designed to suit local conditions and needs. Funding requests should be handled through the usual procedures.

Thought and planning must be given to detailing all costs at the time grant applications are being developed. If a sound Career Progression Plan is submitted as part of a grant application, with a modest overall salary structure, it is likely that the regional CAP offices will favorably consider the small salary increments written into the Progression Plan. Such increases should clearly be promotions for proven ability to perform at a higher level, and to do a more complete, more extensive job at each new level. They do not serve the same purpose as periodic or step increases for continued performance at the same level of responsibility. See CA Memo 23-A for OEO policy on salary increases.

However, salary increases provided to support a Career Development Program should be *guaranteed* to the assistants upon successful completion of specified training and the passing of any predetermined tests. If the individual cannot absorb the training or does not meet the performance criteria, of course he should not be awarded the salary increase, but should get extra help to enable him to qualify.

In addition to tying salary increases into the training and development progress, the awarding of certificates is a desirable form of motivation. Such certificates should be given with sufficient ceremonial recognition such as presentation at formal meetings with staff, parents, children, and others present.



F. ADVANCEMENT CRITERIA

1. Importance of Testing Progress Being Made

Simple but adequate tests should be prepared on each unit of training set up as part of the development program for program assistants. For the assistant who is weak in reading, comprehension tests should be administered orally until her reading skill is sufficiently improved.

Tests tend to strengthen motivation. Most people will study and work harder if they know their learning is to be tested. These tests may be self administered and considered self scored if desirable. The scored tests also, of course, provide feedback for the professional and learner on what is being learned and what is being missed or misunderstood. This points up the importance of holding detailed discussions of test results with each assistant, and the importance of requiring re-study, and if necessary some tutoring, before a re-take of the examination, when results show that too little learning has taken place.

2. Performance Tests

Performance tests or experience requirements should be coupled with oral or written tests whenever practicable, because the assistant should not only know his subject but must also be able to put the knowledge to practical and satisfactory use. While self-study materials can lessen demands on a professional's time in imparting knowledge to the assistant, the development of skills will require demonstrations, tutoring and coaching by the professional, or other qualified person, such as a highly skilled assistant to a professional.

Performance tests or experience criteria can be set up for virtually every skill incorporated in a Career Progression Plan. The teacher or other qualified person should judge the test performance strictly. Assistants will respect the program more, and obtain greater benefits from it, if the person responsible for their development does not let them slide by on shoddy or unskillful performances.

A FEW EXAMPLES OF PERFORMANCE TESTS WHICH MAY BE SET UP LOCALLY ARE THE FOLLOWING:

Tasks or Subjects	*Performance Tests*
Head Start Objectives, Principles and Concepts	Give an organized, accurate explanation of Head Start, without notes
Symptoms of illness and contagious diseases and skin conditions	Identify from illustrations common contagious diseases and skin conditions, such as measles, psoriasis, scarlet fever, and so forth
Study child behavior	Study for 15 minute periods the actions and behavior of 3 children and report and discuss observations and recommendations, reflecting this performance for each child as designated by the teacher.

Weighing and measuring children	Weigh and measure all children in the class at the beginning and end of a 60-day period and make accurate, legible entries in their records

Tasks or Subjects	*Performance Tests*
Involving the families with the center	Visit three families which have not shown as much interest as others, and get them to make a visit to the center and get one parent actively involved
Developmental use of blocks and other stacking and arranging materials	Explain the purpose and principles behind the use of such materials, and demonstrate in class how they should be displayed and how their use should be encouraged
Making house-to-house surveys	Visit at least 10 homes in the area being served, and obtain information on problems and needs as specified by the program's social service director
Working with parent committees	Assist a parent committee to organize and conduct three meetings
Bringing children to and from classroom and physical, dentist or nurse for examination or treatment	Perform this function on two different occasions, in an organized way and with a gentle and soothing manner
Take full responsibility for a group of children in classroom free play	Perform this function for a group of at least 3 and not more than 5 children, on 3 different occasions, to the full satisfaction of the teacher
Posting Family Records	Participate with the professional in working with 3 different families who have special social service problems and needs, draft a summary note for the file, discuss with the professional, modify as necessary, and enter in each file, as appropriate

Tasks or Subjects	*Performance Tests*
Assisting with prenatal and postnatal care	Make 2 visits to the home of an individual who is soon to give birth, and to 2 individuals who have very recently given birth, and provide care as needed and authorized, and request professional assistance as this may be needed
Taking children for medical and dental treatments when parents cannot do so	Perform this function once in the presence of a professional or other qualified person and twice by self and prepare a report thereon
Helping to plan daily programs and new activities	Plan three daily programs, discuss with professional, modify as necessary and carry out the program with a group of five children, including at least one activity, and prepare a report of evaluation thereon

3. Individual Records of Experience and Training

It is suggested that a simple Career Progression Plan Record card be set up to document the training and experience gained by each assistant to qualify for advancement. This will be of particular value as time goes on and assistants work in different centers, under different professionals, and in successive programs. A design for such a record card is suggested on the next page. A sound, well administered Career Progression Plan will produce substantial benefits to all concerned. Such a plan will not succeed if it is poorly administered, if training and experiences are not provided as scheduled or if assistants are advanced from one level to the next on the basis of guess work and completely subjective judgments. Professionals must devote time to the evaluation of their assistants, to planning career development with them, to seeing that they get the training and experience they need and *to ensuring that they have obtained needed knowledge and can apply required skills with a reasonably satisfactory degree of proficiency.*

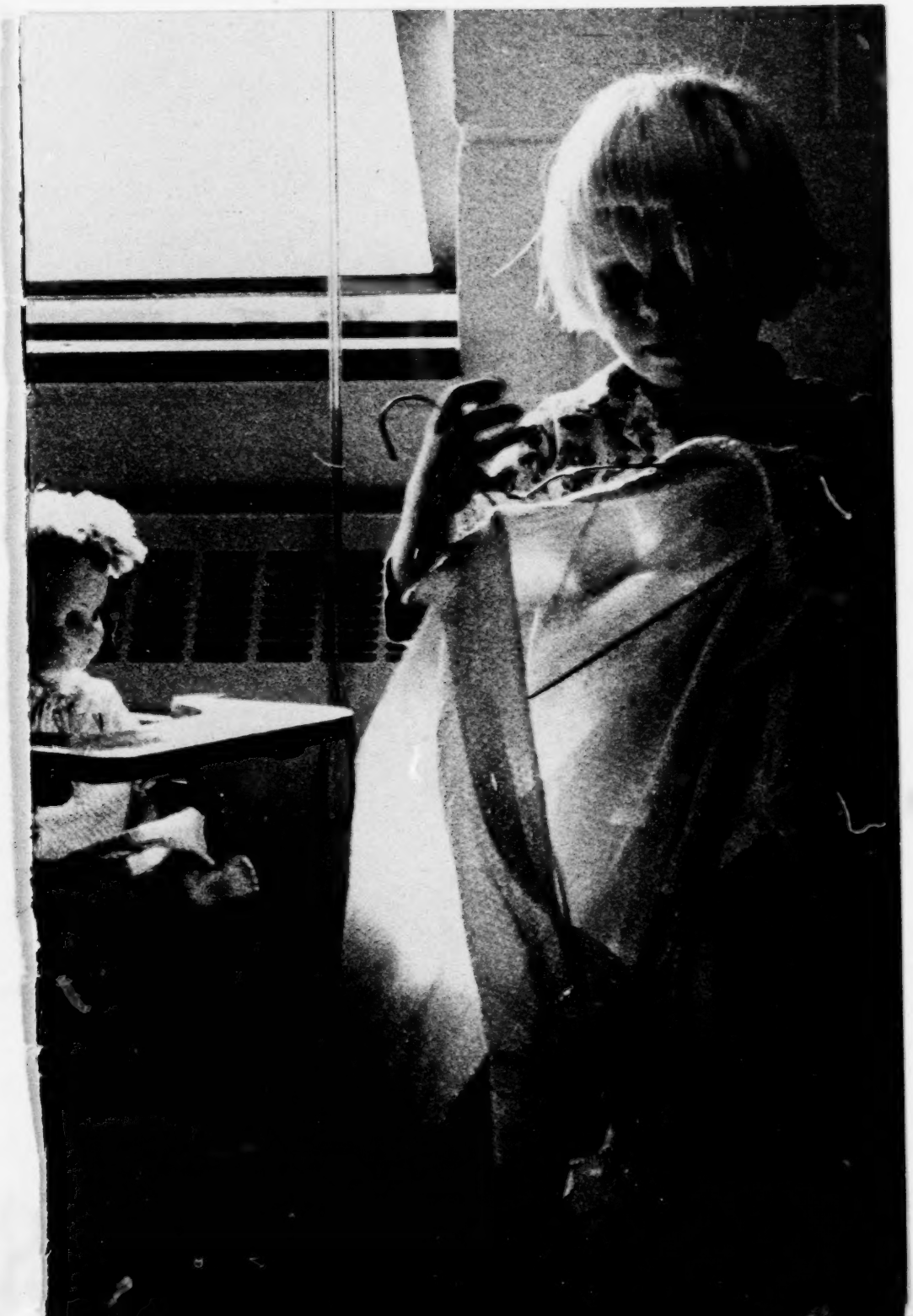
EXAMPLE CAREER PROGRESSION PLAN RECORD CARD

Employee's Name _____ Date hired _____
Center _____ Education _____
Previous related experience _____

Present title _____ Pay rate _____
Position training for _____
Earliest anticipated promotion date _____

Tasks/Subjects Scheduled to be Completed at Present Level	Approval of Written Test	Approval of Performance
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

* U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1969 O - 364-112



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